

REMARKS

Claims 1-59 are pending in this application. Applicants have amended claim 37. Support for the amendment to claim 37 can be found in the application as originally filed at lines 5-6 of paragraph 16 at page 5, and lines 11-15 of paragraph 75 at page 19. Applicants submit that this amendment adds no new matter.

Restriction Requirement

The Office action, pursuant to 35 U.S.C. § 121, sets forth a restriction requirement requiring Applicants to elect one of the following allegedly distinct inventions for prosecution on the merits, namely:

- I) Claims 1-30 and 43-59, drawn to a surgical apparatus, classified in class 606, subclass 213; and
- II) Claims 31-42, drawn to methods for stabilizing tissue, classified in class 128, subclass 898.

Applicants elect Group II, drawn to methods for stabilizing tissue, classified in class 128, subclass 898.

The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned representative with any questions or comments if the Examiner believes a telephone conversation would be helpful in expediting prosecution of the instant application.

Respectfully submitted,

Ronald P. Mare, D.O.M.

Ronda P. Moore, D.V.M.

Attorney for the Applicants

Kirkpatrick & Lockhart Nicholson

Graham LLP

State Street Financial Center

One Lincoln Street

Boston, Massachusetts 02111-2950

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